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November 23, 2009

Chairwoman Inez Tenenbaum  
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission  
4330 East West Highway  
Bethesda, MD 20814

Dear Chairwoman Tenenbaum:

Chinese drywall has devastated families across the country, as they learn that their homes may be deemed worthless and even hazardous to their health. An estimated four to seven thousand homes in at least 32 states are infected with the tainted drywall – a substance reported to emit harmful fumes like sulfur and methane, which corrode appliances and pose serious health risks. Many of these families are recovering from the devastation of natural disasters, only to find that they are victims of yet another disaster – this one man-made.

I applaud the CPSC's report, released today, which establishes a strong association between Chinese drywall and higher levels of hydrogen sulfide and corrosion. This finding is an important step forward for families who are seeking answers to the cause of their destroyed belongings and homes.

However, in order for these families to begin repairing their homes and lives, specific guidance on identification remediation is needed. Many of these families have nowhere to go, and their health and safety will remain at risk until the CPSC provides specific standards to identify affected homes and ensure a complete remediation. Additionally, the potential for the federal or state governments to provide rebuilding aid will be delayed until an appropriate standard is established.

On behalf of the countless families in Louisiana and in the nation whose lives have been turned upside down by Chinese drywall, I implore you to issue complete identification and remediation guidance as soon as possible. I also ask that you provide a timeline for the expected date of completion for the Interagency Task Force's identification and remediation study. I appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Charlie Melancon  
Member of Congress